

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 200349
ORIGIN HEW-06

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 EA-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 OES-09
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DRAFTED BY DHEW/FDA: JJZAIC:VO
APPROVED BY OES/ENP/EN: WJWALSH, III
DHEW/PHS/OASH/OIH: RFISCHER
EUR/NE: DGOODMAN
EA/ANZ: FBENNETT
EUR/CE :SKLINGAMAN (INFO)
AF/S: DJENSEN
EA/PRCM: JBORICH
NEA/ARP: JZIOLKOWSKI

-----007395 090250Z /64

P 082145Z AUG 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY BONN PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY
AMCONSUL HAMILTON PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY DOHA PRIORITY
AMCONSUL HONG KONG PRIORITY
INFO AMCONSUL BRISBANE PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON PRIORITY

UNCLAS STATE 200349

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OGEN, EIND, BDIS, ETRD, UK, AS, GW, SF, NZ, QA, HK, SW

SUBJECT: BOTULISM IN SALMON

1. FDA IS PARTICIPATING IN A PRIORITY INVESTIGATION OF
FOUR CASES OF BOTULISM POISONING IN BIRMINGHAM, ENGLAND
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THAT HAVE BEEN LINKED TO A CAN OF SOCKEYE SALMON PACKED BY
A U.S. FIRM.

2. ON AUGUST 4, 1978, BRITISH HEALTH OFFICIALS
CONFIRMED THE PRESENCE OF BOTULISM TOXIN IN THE CAN. THE
CAN HAS A HOLE IN THE BOTTOM RIM. THE HOLE APPEARS TO
HAVE BEEN CAUSED BY EXTERNAL DAMAGE. NO UNDERPROCESSING

HAS BEEN FOUND, AND THE PROBLEM AT THIS POINT APPEARS TO BE CONFINED TO THE SINGLE DAMAGED CAN. INVESTIGATION IS UNDER WAY TO TRACE THE SOURCE OF THIS DAMAGE. THE SALMON WAS SOLD BY A BRITISH SUPERMARKET CHAIN UNDER THE "JOHN WEST" LABEL. THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAS BANNED THE IMPORTATION OF ALL U.S. SALMON UNTIL THE INVESTIGATION IS COMPLETED. THE GOVERNMENT OF HONG KONG HAS ALSO PLACED AN EMBARGO ON U.S. SALMON PENDING THE OUTCOME OF THE BRITISH INVESTIGATION.

3. THE FOOD POISONING OCCURRED JULY 30, 1978. TWO BROTHERS AND THEIR WIVES, AGES 62-79, SHARED A CAN OF SALMON. ALL

FOUR HAD TO BE HOSPITALIZED. ALL ARE STILL ALIVE BUT ARE LISTED IN CRITICAL CONDITION. THE BRITISH HEALTH OFFICIALS OBTAINED THE CAN AND ASKED FDA TO VERIFY THAT THE "JOHN WEST" SALMON WITH CAN CODE NUMBER RF7GF7145 WAS MANUFACTURED BY AN AMERICAN COMPANY.

4. ON AUGUST 1, FDA CONFIRMED THAT THE SALMON WAS PACKED AT PETER PAN SEAFOOD INC.'S CANNERY AT FALSE PASS, ALASKA. THE CANNER PACKED THE SALMON JULY 14, 1977, AND SENT THE PRODUCT TO ENGLAND WHERE IT WAS LABELED WITH THE "JOHN WEST" BRAND.

5. FDA INVESTIGATORS HAVE CHECKED ALL PROCESSING AND DISTRIBUTION RECORDS FOR CANNED SALMON CONTAINING THE UNCLASSIFIED

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CODE NUMBER IN QUESTION. FDA ALSO HAS A TEAM OF CANNERY EXPERTS AT THE ALASKAN PLANT. INVESTIGATIONS AND A MOBILE LABORATORY ARE AT THE SALMON EXCHANGE WAREHOUSE IN SEATTLE ATTEMPTING TO DETERMINE WHETHER ANY EXISTING STOCKS OF 1977-PRODUCED SALMON MAY SHOW DAMAGE.

6. THE CAN IN ENGLAND WAS CODED RF7G/F7145 AS NOTED ABOVE. THE CODE ON THE CAN IS IN TWO LINES. THE INTERPRETATION OF THE CODE IS : TOP LINE, FIRST CHARACTER, R STANDS FOR RED SALMON, SECOND CHARACTER, F STANDS FOR FALSE PASS CANNING COMPANY, THIRD CHARACTER, 7 STANDS FOR THE YEAR, 1977, FOURTH CHARACTER, G STANDS FOR THE METHOD OF HARVEST, I.E. GILLNET. THE BOTTOM LINE SHOWS THE TIME OF PACK, F 6-8P.M.: THE MONTH OF THE YEAR 7 JULY, THE DAY OF THE MONTH, 14TH, AND THE BOAT NUMBER 5. THUS ON ANY CANNED SALMON IF THE SECOND CHARACTER OF THE TOP LINE OF THE CODE IS NOT "F", YOU MAY BE SURE IT IS NOT FROM THE FALSE PASS CANNING COMPANY.

7. FDA'S INVESTIGATION TO DATE HAS DETERMINED THAT THE LOT BEARING THE CAN CODE NUMBER IN QUESTION INVOLVED APPROXIMATELY 14,460 CANS OF SALMON THAT WERE DISTRIBUTED

TO ENGLAND AND AUSTRALIA, WHERE THEY WERE THEN LABELED UNDER THE "JOHN WEST" BRAND. THIS LOT WAS PROCESSED IN THREE SEPARATE RETORTS (COOKERS) ALONG WITH TWO OTHER CODES OF SALMON. ONE OF THE OTHER CODES (RF7B/F7145) WAS SENT TO AUSTRALIA AND ENGLAND, AGAIN SOLD UNDER THE "JOHN WEST" BRAND. AUSTRALIA HAS BEEN NOTIFIED. FDA IS STILL DEVELOPING DISTRIBUTION DATA ON THE THIRD CODE (KF7M/F7145).

8. AT PRESENT TIME, FDA RECOMMENDS THAT ANYONE HAVING A CAN WITH ONE OF THE CODES LISTED SHOULD SAVE IT PENDING FURTHER ADVICE FROM FDA. OF COURSE, CANNED SALMON WHOSE CAN CODES SHOW IT WAS NOT PACKED BY FALSE PASS CANNING CO. ARE NOT SUSPECT.

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9. FDA WILL BE PROVIDING INFORMATION ON THE SUBJECT CODES TO OES BUREAU/STATE DEPARTMENT AS IT BECOMES AVAILABLE SO THAT IT CAN BE SHARED WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS. CHRISTOPHER

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ORIGIN OES-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /010 R

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DRAFTED BY: WILLIAM J. WALSH, III OES/ENP/EN
APPROVED BY: WILLIAM J. WALSH, III OES/ENP/EN

-----104108 160645Z /23

R 160159Z AUG 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

UNCLAS STATE 200349

FOLLOWING REPEAT STATE 200349 ACTION LONDON
BONN PRETORIA HAMILTON DOHA HONG KONG INFO BRISBANE
CANBERRA WELLINGTON 8 AUG 8.

QUOTE: UNCLAS STATE 200349

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:OGEN, EIND, BDIS, ETRD, UK, AS, GW, SF, NZ, QA, HK, SW

SUBJECT: BOTULISM IN SALMON

1. FDA IS PARTICIPATING IN A PRIORITY INVESTIGATION OF FOUR CASES OF BOTULISM POISONING IN BIRMINGHAM, ENGLAND THAT HAVE BEEN LINKED TO A CAN OF SOCKEYE SALMON PACKED BY A U.S. FIRM.

2. ON AUGUST 4, 1978, BRITISH HEALTH OFFICIALS CONFIRMED THE PRESENCE OF BOTULISM TOXIN IN THE CAN. THE CAN HAS A HOLE IN THE BOTTOM RIM. THE HOLE APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN CAUSED BY EXTERNAL DAMAGE. NO UNDERPROCESSING HAS BEEN FOUND, AND THE PROBLEM AT THIS POINT APPEARS TO BE UNCLASSIFIED

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MENTS. CHRISTOPHER

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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TAGS: OGEN, EIND, BDIS, ETRD, UK, AS, GE, SF, NZ, QA, HK, SW, US
To: LONDON BONN MULTIPLE
Type: TE
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Sheryl P. Walter
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